

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE FORWARDING

ABSTRACT

5

The invention provides a method of transmitting electronic messages in a computer environment. The preferred embodiment receives an electronic message addressed to a telephone number and determines an instant message identifier associated with the telephone number. In response to the determination that an instant message
10 identifier associates with the telephone number, it is further determined whether an instant message receiver is available to receive messages addressed to the instant message identifier. In response to a determination that an instant message receiver is available to receive instant messages addressed to the instant message identifier, the electronic message is forwarded as an instant message addressed to the instant
15 message identifier. In response to a determination that an instant message receiver is available to receive instant message addressed to the instant message identifier, electronic message is sent to a mobile device at the telephone number in response to a determination that no instant message receiver is available to receive instant messages addressed to the instant message identifier.